



The *PluggedIn VA* curriculum and delivery model was developed through a partnership between the Virginia Department of Education's Office of Adult Education and Literacy and several other educational and governmental institutions in Virginia, as well as Northrop Grumman and CGI, Inc. The project was designed to respond to the current adult literacy crisis, as well as the increased need for the Commonwealth to prepare adults for jobs in a technology-driven economy. It has been piloted in Russell County, Virginia, and it is currently being expanded to several other locations in Southwest Virginia. In the four-county region surrounding Russell, 39.5 percent of adults age 25 or older, and nearly one quarter of 18- to-24-year-olds, lack a high school credential. Less than 9 percent of individuals aged 25 or older have a bachelor's degree or higher degree.

Individuals who completed the pilot program earned a GED certificate, Career Readiness Certificate, Microsoft Digital Literacy Certificate, and all or part of the Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3). Students participated in mock interviews, public speaking, a formal dinner with community leaders, and completed a capstone team project that confronts a need in their community.

Graduating students in the pilot also received 24 dual enrollment credits from Southwest Virginia Community College. Seven of the nine graduating students enrolled in community college; all seven were awarded full scholarships from a partnership with the Alcoa Foundation. During the fall semester, only one out of the seven enrolled *PluggedIn VA* needed to take a developmental college course. Two *PluggedIn VA* students made the Dean's list.

Due to the success of the *PluggedIn VA* pilot class, both the local Workforce Investment Board and the Appalachian Regional Commission awarded funds to expand the program to two additional sites in the area. A recent grant award from the U. S. Department of Labor will also fund additional classes in Southwest Virginia. New curricula focused on the healthcare industry and green-jobs weatherization industry are being developed now with support from the Virginia Department of Education's Office of Adult Education and Literacy. However, if this approach to adult education is to flourish throughout the Commonwealth, and serve as a national model, additional support, in the way of state policy, must be supported. To that end, the Virginia Community College System, the Virginia Department of Education, and other workforce entities in Virginia are working to implement a career pathways system in Virginia, as well as exploring opportunities for memoranda of agreement or other articulation agreements that will provide a policy basis for expansion, evaluation, and student tracking between the various workforce systems.